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The contrast between subjects which do and those which do not admit of constitution as an art and science is ever present to Plato's mind, as appears from the *Sophist*, *Politicus*, *Gorgias*, and *Phaedrus*. And he would normally express the idea by a genitive with τέχνη (cf. *Protagoras* 357A; *Phaedrus* 260E). One of the most instructive examples of this is *Republic* 488E: μήτε τέχνην τούτου μήτε μελέτην, which I interpreted in *Classical Review*, June, 1906, p. 247. Cf. *Republic* 518D: τούτου τοίνυν, ἦν δ' ἐγώ, αὐτοῦ τέχνη ἂν εἴη, etc. Compare also *Laws* 837E: τέχνην δὲ τιν' αὐτοῦ τοῦ νόμου τῆς θέσεως . . . ἔχω, with 838E: οἱ τέχνην ἐγὼ πρὸς τούτον τὸν νόμον ἔχοιμι. The genitive in the *Gorgias* passage receives further slight confirmation from 509DE, ἐπὶ τοῦτο δεῖ . . . τέχνην compared with 510A. Cf. in the passage of the *Laws* cited above, the combination of τέχνην πρὸς with the genitive.

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### AN UNAPPRECIATED JOKE IN ARISTOPHANES

In the passage immediately following the parabasis in the *Wasps*, Bdelycleon appears accompanied by his father, Philocleon, whose grudging consent he has won to a change of life. Preparatory to the dinner that is to celebrate the conversion of the old man, Bdelycleon produces for his father a new outfit of clothing. The cloak that is to replace the old tribon arouses a storm of protests in the midst of which comes the assertion (ll. 1141-42):

ἀτὰρ δοκεῖ γέ μοι  
εὐικεῖναι μάλιστα Μορύχου σάγματι

What is the full significance of these words?

Under the lemma, Μορύχου σάγματι, we find recorded in the Venetus scholia the following remarks: Μόρυχος ὥχρος. σάγματι δὲ τῷ μαλλωτῷ σάγῳ, ᾧ ἐχρήτο ὡς τρυφερὸς πλείονι θάλπει χρώμενος. \*Ἄλλως. τῶν περὶ τρυφήν ἐσπουδακότων ὁ Μόρυχος. σάγματι δὲ ἐπεὶ παχέα. ἴσως ὡς ἐκείνου παχεῖ σάγματι χρωμένον. In all this there is little that could not be derived from a reading of Aristophanes himself. Morychus is introduced in other places by the poet and in such fashion that the salient features of the man are well known. Only the statement that he was sallow seems to be without warrant. It may well have been a bit of irrelevant and gratuitous divination. But the point that concerns us most is the interpretation of the word σάγμα. The author of each of the two notes, apparently without question, regards the word as the genuine name of a garment, one of them equating it with σάγος, to which it may possibly be etymologically akin. It is just as likely, however, that the interpretation offered rests upon no surer foundation than a superficial reading of the passage itself, coupled with the specious relationship to σάγος.

Fortunately, though exceedingly rare, the word σάγμα occurs in two other passages of the same period, and in both the context is such as to leave

little doubt as to the meaning intended. In *Acharnians* 574. Lamachus, the representative of the war party, on being summoned by the chorus, exclaims: τίς Γοργόν' ἐξήγειρεν ἐκ τοῦ σάγματος; The scholiast remarks: Ὡς τοῦ Λαμάχου ἔχοντος ἐντετυπωμένην τῇ ἀσπίδι Γοργόνα. ἐκ τοῦ σάγματος: Ἐκ τῆς θήκης τοῦ ὅπλου, ὃ καλεῖται σάγμα, σάγη γὰρ τὸ ὅπλον· καὶ πανσαγία, ἡ πανοπλία. ἀντὶ οὖν τὴν ἀσπίδα. ἐν δὲ τῇ ἀσπίδι ἐτετύπωτο ἡ Γοργών.

Similarly in Euripides' *Andromache* 616-18, Peleus chides Menelaus in these words:

ὃς οὐδὲ τρωθεὶς ἦλθες ἐκ Τροίας μόνος,  
κάλλιστα τεύχη δ' ἐν καλοῖσι σάγμασιν  
ὅμοι' ἐκέισε δεῦρό τ' ἡγαγες πάλιν.

The comment of the scholiast is: σάγμασι: ταῖς θήκαις τῶν ἀσπίδων. Whence did he get the notion that by τεύχη Euripides meant shield? Liddell and Scott's *Lexicon* treats that word as meaning arms in general, "always of a warrior's whole armor, harness." Did the commentator have independent knowledge that σάγμα was a technical term meaning shield-cover, or was he guessing (the origin of the conjecture would seem hard to find), or should we add a new meaning for τεύχη in our dictionaries?<sup>1</sup>

With the exception of the three passages mentioned, σάγμα is not found again in Greek literature until the beginning of the Christian era, when it occurs a few times, the meaning generally ascribed being "saddle" or "burden." Some editors, to be sure, have adopted the proposal to substitute σάγμασιν for σώμασιν in Aeschylus' *Prometheus* 463, but the alteration seems needless. Furthermore, a scholium to Euripides' *Phoenissae* 779 contains the statement: οἱ δὲ γράφουσι τὰ σάγματα. That tradition seems not to have been given serious consideration by modern editors, and certainly if the recorded variant ever did stand in the place of ἀμφιβλήματα, still further changes would be entailed, so that it is needless to speculate in regard to the possible bearing of the note.

Was σάγμα then used in the time of Aristophanes with the technical meaning of shield-cover, or was the word capable of general application as any sort of covering, as its apparent connection with the verb σάπτω might suggest, its particular value for any given instance depending wholly upon the context? It may seem strange that if it was a regularly accepted term with definite and restricted meaning, considering all that was written about warfare and warlike preparations, we do not meet the word more frequently. But neither do we meet any other word with the meaning in question; and yet that the Greeks did cover their shields, not merely in the intervals between campaigns but even on the march, is attested by *Anacreon*, 21.4,<sup>2</sup> Euripides'

<sup>1</sup> The scholium on ἐκφέρετε τεύχη, Euripides' *Phoenissae* 779, is τεύχη: τὰς ἀσπίδας. There is nothing in the context that would seem of itself to suggest such a note.

<sup>2</sup> For this citation the writer is indebted to Professor Edward Capps. The passage is one of peculiar interest. If it is to be interpreted literally, it affords an instance of a shield-cover serving as a garment. One would hardly infer, however, that the practice was widespread or that Morychus actually clothed himself in a shield-cover.

*Andromache* 616-18, and Xenophon's *Anabasis* i. 2, 16. That the practice was not invariable might be gathered from *Acharnians* 279. The same strange reticence is observable in regard to the spear-cover. There is but one allusion to a spear-cover, so far as the writer is aware, and it is in the very play of Aristophanes (*Acharnians* 1120) that affords the clearest instance of *σάγμα* as shield-cover. The term used, *ἐλντρον*, like *σάγμα*, is etymologically capable of wider application and is used by later writers in a variety of senses.

But if the scarcity of literary allusions to the *σάγμα* is striking, no less striking is the fact that, although the warrior and his equipment frequently served as subjects for the Greek artist, only once, in a vase painting of the early fifth century (Gerhard, *Auserlesene Vasenbilder*, IV, Plate CCLXIX), do we find a suggestion of a shield-cover. Gulick, *Life of the Ancient Greeks*, p. 191, gives a cut of the painting, and on the following page, using the term *σάγμα*, speaks as if it were the regular custom to cover the shield. Daremberg et Saglio, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités*, I, 1250, *s.v. clipeus*, also refer to this painting and conclude that the *σάγμα* was used to protect especially fine shields.

Besides the evidence already cited, Pollux in two separate passages,<sup>1</sup> Hesychius,<sup>2</sup> Photius,<sup>3</sup> and Suidas<sup>4</sup> attest the meaning shield-cover. Suidas, to be sure, cites in proof of his interpretation only the two passages from the *Acharnians* and the *Andromache*. However, nowhere but in the scholia to *Wasps* 1142 do we find any hint that *σάγμα* ever meant a garment. Liddell and Scott's *Lexicon*, with great caution, follows these scholia in equating *σάγμα* with *σάγος*, "a large cloak," and this seems to have been the practice of all the editors of the *Wasps* with the exception of Van Leeuwen and Starkie, who see no difference between the meaning of the word in the *Wasps* and that in the other two passages, except that in the *Wasps* a joke is intended. That the poet is jesting seems reasonable, for there would be small point in having his character say, "this seems most like the cloak of Morychus," no matter how extravagant a garment that epicure may actually have worn. Besides, whereas names for articles of dress are found in great abundance in Greek writings, this would be the sole occurrence of *σάγμα* in such a use.

Starkie, who gives the fullest commentary upon the passage, seems, however, to have missed the full significance of the joke. This is his note. "δοκεῖ, 'as far as appearances go, it is like Morychus' 'shield-case.'" τῶν περὶ τρυφήν ἐσπουδακότων ὁ Μόρυχος (schol. R; cp. line 506 n.). The enormous cloak worn by this 'whoreson round man' in winter resembled in cut a 'shield-case,' cp. schol. V *σάγματι δὲ ἐπεὶ παχέα* (?). Indeed, such a man ἀστράτευτος ὢν was not likely to have anything else warlike about him."

Now, the garment in question is fairly well described by the poet himself. It is called a *χλαῖνα* (1132), but not the ordinary variety (1137). It is thick and shaggy (1138, 1147), hence hot (1151, 1153, 1155-56). It seems

<sup>1</sup> vii. 157 and x. 142.

<sup>2</sup> *S.v. σάγμα*.

<sup>3</sup> *S.v. σάγμα*.

<sup>4</sup> *S.v. σάγμα*.

to have tassels (1144). But what is there in all this that would suggest a shield-case? The scholiast does say *σάγματι δὲ ἐπὶ παχέα*. But at any rate that has nothing to do with "cut," and it is more than likely that it was only a bad guess, for in the vase painting to which allusion has been made there is no unusual thickness observable in the *σάγμα*. How could a *χλαῖνα* resemble a shield-case in cut? And if it did, is it likely that such resemblance would be distinguishable before the garment was put on? There is a possibility that the point of the joke lay in the unusual size of the garment: as the genuine *σάγμα* presumably covered the whole shield, so the cloak of Morychus, by a pardonable hyperbole, may have been said to have covered the whole man. But may not the psychology of the passage be a bit more subtle?

Morychus, as the scholiast notes, was *τῶν περὶ τρυφήν ἐσπονδακώτων*. Just what aspect of the word *τρυφή* should we think of in this connection? Morychus is named by Aristophanes in three other places. In *Acharnians* 887 allusion is made to his fondness for Copaic eels. In *Wasps* 506 he is said to live a *βίον γενναῖον*. However reputable the natural connotation of the phrase may have been, the audience is left in no doubt of its meaning for Philocleon when applied to Morychus, for he immediately (ll. 508-11) interprets it as signifying indulgence of the appetite. Among the dainties mentioned as suggested by the passage are the familiar eels. In keeping with this is the reference in the *Peace* (ll. 1005-9), where Morychus is found in company with "Teleas and Glaucetes and many other epicures" struggling for his favorite dish of Copaic eel. That this is not a merely accidental and temporary grouping of names is seen by comparing a fragment of the *Perialges* of the comic poet Plato, in which the same triumvirate is found, with the exception of Teleas, who this time is replaced by the more notorious Leogoras. Obviously all four are typical high liver of the period. Bearing this in mind, we may imagine the mental process involved in our passage to have been somewhat as follows. "This is a fine, large cloak that my son is offering me. It is more befitting a dandy than a plain old man like me—such a voluptuary, in fact, as Morychus." The recollection of the "fair round belly" of that worthy, or at any rate the thought that the stomach was the seat of his affections, might then suggest the object that was similar in appearance, the shield. Ergo his cloak is a shield-case. To call it so is all the more humorous, if, like the notorious Cleonymus, his disposition is the opposite of warlike.

But the situation is somewhat simplified and the explanation above suggested is made more plausible, when we consider a passage in the *Acharnians*, produced but three years before the *Wasps*. Lamachus the warrior is pitted against the peace-loving Dicaeopolis in amoebean verse, line for line. The former no sooner issues his prosaic order (l. 1122):

*τοὺς κἀλλίβαντας οἶσε παῖ τῆς ἀσπίδος*

than it is immediately capped by the mocking:

*καὶ τῆς ἐμῆς τοὺς κριβανίτας ἔκφερε*

The scholiast's *λείπει γαστρός* is as obvious as it is true, provided we treat the passage literally. The rest of the note misses the point in curious fashion: *ἔν' ἧ, καὶ τῆς ἐμῆς γαστρὸς τὴν ἀνάπανσιν ἔκφερε τοὺς κριβανίτας ἄρτους. ἔπαυε δὲ χαριέντως ὅτι καὶ οὗτοι περιφερεῖς ὡς αἱ ἀσπίδες*. That the loaves were round may well have been true, but that fact has nothing to do with the interpretation of the joke. Does not the language rather suggest that "shield" was slang for "belly"? Mueller in his edition suggests that Dicaeopolis, as he speaks the words, "*ventrem digito monstrat*." Merry expresses a similar view. But Rogers, with his customary discernment, remarks, "But I strongly suspect that the round protuberant paunch of some corpulent citizen had been compared to the *ἀσπίς ὀμφαλόεσσα*, which a soldier in battle protruded before him; and that we have here an allusion to that description, an allusion which the audience would at once understand." Certain it is that evidence is not lacking of the Greek fondness for applying to parts of the body nicknames borrowed from various sources, some of them no doubt of sportive significance. The temptation to hit upon such a slang usage of "shield" must have been doubly great. Not only the superficial, general resemblance between shield and belly, but also the fact that from Homer on a distinguishing feature common to both was named *ὀμφαλός*, would seem to make the usage almost inevitable, especially when we recall how familiar an object the shield was and what exceptional opportunities the Greek possessed of making the comparison suggested. That he was not slow to make it, that it was not a brand-new coinage of the age of Aristophanes, would appear from *Tyrtaeus* 11.24:

*ἀσπίδος εὐρείης γαστρὶ καλυψάμενος.*

That the passage in which this line occurs is epic and dignified lends all the more color to the belief that the usage was well recognized, even earlier than Tyrtaeus himself.<sup>1</sup> If our own English vocabulary had been fashioned under similar circumstances, who knows but that instead of inglorious "pot-belly," a term that suggests the piping times of peace, or at all events an era when the shield had become less useful than ornamental, we might have forged a more martial phrase ourselves?<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Γαστήρ* was of course also applied to other inanimate objects, as to the bulge of a bottle (Cratinus *Pytine* 18), but that does not vitiate the argument.

<sup>2</sup> The writer is indebted to Dr. Theodore A. Buenger, of the University of Pennsylvania, for an interesting parallel from Latin literature to the passage under discussion. Claudianus *In Eutrop*, ii. 386 ff., in describing a general of Eutropius, writes:

Tunc Ajax erat Eutropii, lateque fremebat,  
Non septem vasto quatiens umbone iuvenus;  
Sed quam perpetuis dapibus pigroque sedili  
Inter anus interque colos oneraverat, alvum.

It is not improbable that Claudianus, who had spent much of his life among Greek-speaking peoples and had written in Greek himself, is here imitating some Greek model. If not, he at least testifies to the naturalness of the joke.